DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 100 421 JC 750 050

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TITLE Characteristics, Preparation, and Attitudes of Selected Public Junior-Community College Deans of Instruction.
PUB DATE 73
NOTE 13p.; Summary of Ph.D. Dissertation, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Administrative Personnel; *Administrator Attitudes; Administrator Background; *Administrator Characteristics; Administrator Education; *College Administration; *College Deans; Doctoral Theses; *Junior Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *Dean of Instruction

ABSTRACT

A descriptive survey of all public, comprehensive junior colleges' deans of instruction was conducted to ascertain and examine their characteristics, preparation, and attitudes. From a final sample of 504 questionnaires, it was determined that the chief academic officers, most commonly called the deans of instruction, were typically Caucasian, male, married, 45 years old, and veterans of military service. Previous administrative experience was considered the major qualification for their present positions. Most had earned a BA or MA in a teaching related field and of the 57 percent who had doctorates, 66 percent were in higher education. Their formal academic preparation contributed significantly toward their understanding of a limited number of instructional strategies, procedures, and functions. A majority of the deans agreed that their academic preparation familiarized them with learning theory, curriculum design, philosophy of the junior-community college, and techniques of evaluating instruction. Some deans felt their formal academic preparation did not provide them with an understanding of collective bargaining and negotiations, techniques and procedures for selecting classroom furniture and equipment, programmed budgeting, physical plant planning and supervision, and programmed instruction. (Author/MJK)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

ED100421

A SUMMARY OF THE DISSERTATION OF

William Martin Anderson, for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education (Higher Education), received on August 31, 1973, at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

Characteristics, Preparation, and Attitudes of Selected Public Junior-Community College Deans of Instruction

Major Professor: Donald J. Tolle

This study was focused specifically on the chief academic officer of the junior-community college. Essentially, the researcher set out to ascertain and examine the characteristics, preparation, and attitudes of a very new two-year college administrator. Had the same study been conducted ten years earlier, the results would certainly have shown that the chief academic officer was the president.

The ever increasing role of the junior college in lower division undergraduate education, its rapidly expanding curriculum, and the recency of its current instructional administrative patterns all emphasized the importance of studying the nature of deans of instruction. Specifically, this study was designed to determine personal characteristics, professional background, and preparation, to elicit attitudes toward certain aspects of instructional administration, and to seek recommendations regarding the preparation of chief academic officers.

Decision was made to conduct a descriptive survey of all public comprehensive junior-community college deans of instruction in order to achieve the purposes outlined above. Determination as to which junior colleges met the criteria of "public" and "comprehensive" was based on data contained in the 1972 Junior College Directory. A questionnaire was developed and mailed to 766 public junior-community colleges. A total of 616 questionnaires, or eighty percent, were returned. About thirteen percent of these respondents reported an organizational structure which did not include an instructional officer other than the president with responsibility for the entire program. For this reason and others, the usable returns were reduced to 504, or approximately seventy-five percent.

About eighty-seven percent of the institutions responding had a second echelon administrator with over-all responsibility for the instructional program. Most often (92 percent) they reported directly to the president. An average of 4.7 full-time administrators reported directly to the dean of instruction.

The mean age of these deans of instruction was forty-five, nearly ninety-four percent were Caucasian, and over ninety-four percent were married. The vast majority (97.7 percent) were men.

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There were fifty-one different titles used to designate the chief academic officer. The most common title was dean of instruction, which was used in 48.3 percent of the institutions.

These deans had experienced fairly short terms of service with the average being 4.4 years.

A large majority (67.6 percent) of the deans were veterans of military service. GI Bill benefits for education and leadership experience as a commissioned officer were most frequently cited as the benefits they derived from their military service.

Most chief academic officers were experienced teachers and administrators. Within institutions of higher learning alone, they averaged more than five years of teaching and seven years of administrative experience. Significantly, some forty-seven percent had taught in junior colleges, while fifty-six percent had previously been junior college administrators. About half (forty-seven percent) had had experience as department chairmen. This previous professional experience is summarized in Table I.

TABLE I

PREVIOUS PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS

	Tchg.			Admin.		
	No. With Experience	%	Mean Years	No. With Experience	%	Mean Years
Elementary, junior high and/or secondary	313	62.1	3.6	139	27.6	1.9
Junior College	289	47.3	3.8	281	55.8	4.5
Senior college or university	162	32.1	1.5	93	18.5	0.8

Approximately fifty-four percent of the respondents were reassigned within their present institutions in becoming the chief academic officer. These deans were most frequently (67.8 percent) serving in other administrative capacities at the time of their appointment. Deans believed that this previous administrative experience was the most important factor in preparing them to fulfill their responsibilities as chief academic officer. Over sixty-four percent shared this opinion.

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About twenty-three percent of the chief academic officers had attended junior colleges as students. Among these, ninety percent had been enrolled in baccalaureate programs. Social science, secondary education, and science were the most frequent areas of undergraduate concentration completed by present deans of instruction. The same three areas dominated the master's degree work completed. Nearly a quarter (twenty-three percent) of the deans had earned a specialist's degree and higher education was the major field studied by 45.8 percent of these administrators. Some fifty-seven percent of the chief academic officers had finished the doctorate, with sixty-one percent of these concentrating in higher education. The mean year in which deans received their highest degree was 1962; the median year was 1964.

As might be expected, those deans who had the doctorate regarded it as being considerably more important than did those who did not have the degree. In terms of current responsibilities, eighty percent of the doctorate holders considered the degree as either important or essential. Their collective opinion was even stronger with regard to future plans. In this instance, over ninety percent valued the doctorate as either important or essential. Deans without the doctorate "mildly agreed" that completing the doctorate had merit in terms of current responsibilities and future plans, while the largest group (50.8 percent) felt that it would be nice to have but that they could get along fine without it.

Those deans who had earned neither a specialist's nor a doctoral degree (188) had completed an average of 28.7 semester hours of work beyond the master's. Among those who had not earned the doctorate, twenty-seven percent were enrolled in doctoral programs; yet, an additional 46.9 percent had definitely decided not to pursue the doctorate.

With regard to instructional strategies, Table II shows that chief academic officers believed that they were best prepared in learning theory. More than forty-four percent maintained that they did not receive instruction which enabled them to understand programmed instruction. Among the instructional procedures and functions considered, deans felt best prepared in curriculum design, techniques of evaluating instruction, techniques of long range planning, and follow-up procedures. Conversely, they considered their understanding of collective bargaining and negotiations, programmed budgeting, and techniques and procedures for selecting classroom furniture and equipment the weakest aspects of their formal academic preparation. The opinions of chief academic officers regarding their understanding of certain instructional procedures and functions which resulted from their formal education are summarized in Table III.

TABLE II

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EFFECTIVENESS OF ACADEMIC PREPARATION TOWARD UNDERSTANDING CERTAIN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND PHILOSOPHIES

Key: 1 - Agree strongly 2 - Agree 3 - Agree mildly 4 - Disagree mildly 5 - Disagree 6 - Disagree strongly	Rank Order of Effectiveness	Agree Strongly	Agree	Agree Mildly	Disagree Mildly	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Mean Rating
Learning Theory	1	24.5	45.5	19.0	4.3	3.6	3.0	2.261
Philosophy of junior-community college	2	33.5	17.6	13.8	9.1	11.6	14.4	2.909
Behavioral Objectives	3	13.6	25.7	30.3	10.4	11.0	9.0	3.063
Developmental and/or remedial education	4	6.9	22.0	32.4	14.7	13.5	10.4	3.369
Programmed Instruction	5	7.7	18.1	29.7	18.1	15.9	10.4	3.475

TABLE III

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EFFECTIVENESS OF ACADEMIC PREPARATION TOWARD UNDERSTANDING CERTAIN INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES AND FUNCTIONS

Key: 1 - Agree strongly 2 - Agree 3 - Agree mildly 4 - Disagree mildly 5 - Disagree 6 - Disagree strongly	Rank Order of Effectiveness	Agree Strongly	Agree	Agree Mildly	Disagree Mildly	Disagree	Disagree Strongly	Mean Rating
Curriculum design	1	26.1	38.0	22.8	5.7	4.0	3.4	2.339
Techniques of evaluating instruction	2	15.0	35.3	26.8	10.1	7.7	5.1	2.755
Techniques of long range planning	3	16.8	25.9	30.2	11.9	9.5	5.7	2.885
Follow-up procedures	4	12.7	33.5	28.3	9.7	8.6	7.2	2.895
Techniques and procedures for selecting faculty	5	8.9	30.0	28.9	12.8	12.6	6.9	3.107
Budget preparation and planning	6	11.8	29.0	23.7	13.0	11.0	11.6	3.170
Techniques and procedures for selecting textbooks	7	4.7	22.6	27.5	17.7	15.8	11.7	3.524
Management by objectives	8	8.6	20.0	23.1	19.2	15.7	13.3	3.534
Physical plant planning and supervision of construction	9	9.2	17.6	23.1	16.4	14.9	18.8	3.667
Programmed budgeting	10	5.7	17.2	19.0	18.6	21.9	17.6	3.865
Techniques and procedures for selecting classroom furniture & equipment	11	4.3	10.4	25.8	18.8	21.1	19.6	4.008
Collective bargaining and negotiations	12	3.0	11.4	20.7	7.3	25.4	32.1	4.370

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Providing an internship was the most frequently made proposal for the preparation of chief academic officers. Deans also emphasized the importance of teaching experience and the need to understand human relations.

Chief academic officers spend more time in completing routine administrative duties than on any other function. Preferably, they would devote more time to curriculum work, faculty relations and morale, and evaluation of personnel and programs. They believed that curriculum work should be given the highest priority in terms of time spent.

Slightly more than half (fifty-three percent) desired to be junior college presidents.

Deans of instruction were strongly committed to the concepts of general education, behavioral objectives, instructional accountability, and non-traditional study. The number of deans who believed that general education should be emphasized compared very closely with the number of institutions studied in which this concept was emphasized. Deans would like to see the other issues and concepts which were considered in the study emphasized more frequently than they currently were stressed. The chief academic officers were not convinced, however, that junior colleges should become involved in offering the three-year baccalaureate degree. Perhaps their clear-cut objection (72.9 percent) represents more misunderstanding than opposition. These attitudes expressed by deans are summarized in Table IV.

As shown in Table V, deans of instruction generally believed that the administrative and instructional practices considered in this study existed in too few institutions. Many of those administrators were employed at junior colleges where these practices did not exist; yet, they believed they should have existed. With the exception of two such practices, the chief academic officers would have liked to make these practices more widespread. Professorial rank existed in forty percent of the institutions; yet, fifty-six percent of the deans were opposed to it. Over forty percent of these administrators disagreed with the policy of granting tenure to teaching faculty, a practice which occurred in 76.5 percent of the junior colleges studied. In spite of the fact that these deans were opposed to the practices of formal negotiations and collective bargaining with the faculty, chief academic officers teaching classes, and a "grading" system of pass-fail only, the number of deans who supported these practices was larger than the number of institutions in which these practices existed. However, the difference in the case of collective bargaining and negotiations was very slight. Those practices which the greatest percentage of deans believed should exist were credit by examination and evaluation of instruction by administrators and students.

TABLE IV

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EXISTENCE OF CERTAIN ISSUES AND CONCEPTS AND AN EVALUATION OF THEIR APPROPRIATENESS

Issues and Concepts	Presently Exists		Should be		Should not be	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Institutional emphasis on general education	379	78.8	377	81.3	87	18.7
Institutional emphasis on behavioral objectives	266	55.4	400	87.3	58	12.7
Institutional emphasis on instructional accountability	275	57.0	455	94.6	26	5.4
Non-traditional study including classrooms without walls	200	41.5	374	81.1	87	18.9
Three-year baccalaureate degree	16	3.6	110	27.1	296	72.9

TABLE V

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EXISTENCE OF CERTAIN PRACTICES AND AN EVALUATION OF THEIR APPROPRIATENESS

Practices	Presently exists		Should be		Should not be	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Shared governance	393	82.0	407	88.7	52	11.3
Professorial rank	204	40.5	192	38.1	285	56.5
Evaluating of instruction by:						
a. administrators	455	93.0	452	95.8	20	4.2
b. peers	290	62.0	404	88.2	54	11.8
c. students	381	78.9	440	93.4	31	6.6
Merit pay for:						
a. teaching faculty	153	30.4	331	70.1	141	29.9
b. administrators	148	30.5	319	67.9	151	32.1
Tenure for teaching faculty	371	76.5	274	58.8	192	41.2
Formal negotiations and collective bargaining with the faculty	172	35.2	171	36.8	294	63.2
Credit by examination	455	91.4	470	98.3	8	1.7
External degrees	83	17.5	277	62.4	167	37.6
Chief academic officer teaches classes	89	18.0	220	46.3	255	53.7
Faculty participates directly in the selection of academic administrators	265	53.6	327	68.7	149	31.3

TABLE V (Continued)

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Practices	Presently exists Freq.	%	Should be Freq.	%	Should not be Freq.	%
Faculty formally evaluate academic administrators	162	33.1	345	74.4	119	25.6
A "grading" system of pass-fail only	48	9.9	101	21.4	372	78.6
System of evaluating students utilizing only grades of A, B, C, and incomplete	159	32.5	246	52.8	220	47.2

Conclusions

The findings of this study provided the basis for the following general conclusions:

1. Most junior college presidents had delegated the over-all responsibility for the instructional program to a second echelon chief academic officer. This organizational structure existed at eighty-seven percent of the institutions studied.

2. The chief academic officers of the public junior colleges studied ranged in age from twenty-eight to sixty-five and typically were Caucasian males, married, and veterans of military service. Less than three percent (2.3 percent) were women, only 5.8 percent were unmarried, and just six percent of the deans represented minority groups. Less than a third (32.6 percent) had not been in the military service.

3. The most common title for the chief academic officer was dean of instruction. More than forty-eight percent of the junior colleges studied had chosen this designation.

4. Consistent with previous studies, deans of instruction had served in that capacity for relatively short terms of service. Those deans studied averaged 4.4 years of service as the chief academic officer.

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5. Apparently, previous administrative experience was considered a very significant qualification in the selection of junior college deans of instruction. More than eighty-three percent of the respondents were administrators at educational institutions immediately prior to their present appointment.

6. Deans, too, considered administrative experience a very important factor in preparing a chief academic officer for his responsibilities. Approximately eighty-one percent of the deans studied regarded their previous administrative experience as the best preparation for their assignment as chief academic officer. This conclusion was further substantiated by the fact that deans recommended an internship more often than other proposals for the preparation of chief academic officers.

7. Generally deans of instruction earned their bachelor's and master's degrees in a teaching discipline and among those deans who completed advanced degrees (master's or higher), administration was the most common area of concentration. Most deans of instruction specialized in social science, secondary education, and science in completing both their bachelor's and master's degrees. Advanced degrees were most often completed in higher education. At the doctoral level, sixty-one percent or 288 deans who had earned that degree concentrated in higher education.

8. Apparently the master's degree was regarded as the minimum educational degree generally required of chief academic officers. Of those few deans who did not have a master's degree, only one had not earned either a specialist's or a doctoral degree. A significant percentage (twenty-three percent) had earned a specialist's degree. A much larger percentage (fifty-seven percent) had earned the doctorate. The number of deans who had completed the doctorate represented a very significant increase. The most recent previous study (Latta and Hartung) reported that only forty-three percent of the deans of instruction held the doctorate.

9. The formal academic preparation of chief academic officers contributed significantly toward their understanding of a limited number of instructional strategies, procedures, and functions. A majority of the deans either "agreed strongly" or "agreed" that their academic preparation familiarized them with learning theory (seventy percent), curriculum design (64.1 percent), philosophy of the junior-community college (51.1 percent), and techniques of evaluating instruction (50.3 percent).

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10. Their formal academic preparation did not provide many of the deans with an understanding of instructional strategies, procedures, and functions. At least forty-four percent of the deans of instruction studied believed that their academic preparation did not familiarize them with the following: collective bargaining and negotiations (64.8 percent), techniques and procedures for selecting classroom furniture and equipment (59.5 percent), programmed budgeting (58.1 percent), physical plant planning and supervision (50.1 percent), management by objective (48.2 percent), techniques and procedures for selecting textbooks (45.2 percent), and programmed instruction (44.4 percent).

11. Too much time was spent on routine administrative tasks. The allocation of time should have more closely paralleled the importance of functions. Deans reported that they spent twenty percent of their time performing routine administrative tasks, more time than they devoted to any other function.

12. Several issues and concepts were not receiving sufficient emphasis in many community colleges. The percentage of deans who believed that instructional accountability, behavioral objectives, and non-traditional study should be emphasized was considerably larger than the percentage of institutions which emphasized these same issues and concepts.

13. Because of several factors, it can be anticipated that administrative and academic practices may be altered in the future. The attitudes of deans reflected in this study, the fact that deans represent the greatest source of junior college presidents, and the fact that fifty-three percent of the administrators studied here aspired to be junior college presidents, all seemed to affirm the potential for change in the future. Deans were opposed to the practice of granting professorial rank, collective bargaining, chief academic officers teaching classes, and grading systems of pass-fail only. Seemingly, tenure practices would also be subject to change. Tenure existed in 76.5 percent of the institutions studied, but only 58.8 percent of the deans believed it "should be." It would appear that several other practices might occur more frequently in the future. At least a majority of the deans of instruction studied believed that the following practices should exist even though they occur presently in less than a third of the institutions studied: external degrees (17.5 percent), merit pay for faculty (30.4 percent), merit pay for administrators (30.5 percent), system of evaluating students utilizing only grades of A, B, C, and incomplete (32.5 percent), and faculty formal evaluation of academic administrators (33.1 percent).

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Recommendations

The findings of this study generated the following recommendations:

1. It is recommended that studies be made of graduate programs designed to prepare junior college administrators. Particular attention should be given to how specifically these programs are geared to the junior college and whether they reflect an awareness of its unique functions and problems. The findings of this study would help identify potential areas for close scrutiny and evaluation.

2. It is recommended that studies of internship programs be made and that models be developed which could be incorporated into graduate programs either as optiors or as requirements, particularly for those aspiring administrators with very limited experience.

3. It is recommended that in-service activities for administrators and their potential be carefully examined. These types of experiences could be developed as a continuing education program for practicing deans of instruction. National needs should be identified and communicated to federal agencies which administer grant programs such as the Educational Development Professions Act so that allocations could be directed to priority proposals.

4. Sabbatical leave plans should be studied particularly as a potential means for providing learning opportunities which deans of instruction desire. Sabbatical leaves of short duration and periodically scheduled could provide opportunities for deans to teach, participate in internships, or be exposed to vocational-technical education including the world of work.

5. It is recommended that studies be made of the impact of collective bargaining upon the office of the chief academic officer. Many writers have described the academic dean as the man in the middle between the president and the faculty. Collective bargaining seemingly alters this orientation as well as relations in general. Such a study should also consider the impact of collective bargaining on the allocation of the dean's time with regard to sitting at the bargaining table, as well as reviewing grievances filed against the administration. The influence of collective bargaining upon the human relations aspect of the dean's role should also be examined.

6. It is recommended that studies be undertaken to determine methods of implementing those practices which deans of instruction apparently support quite staunchly. The concept of merit pay should be studied as a possible alternative to collective bargaining. Plans which allow faculty an opportunity to evaluate administrators should be studied and evaluated.